

August 2002

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

Another generally warm month across the UK, with most places having mean temperatures 1 to 2 °C above normal. Sunshine values close to or just below normal, with above average rainfall across eastern Scotland and north-east England.

On the 1st, Fylingdales had 115 mm in 24 hours, their wettest day (09 to 09) since records began in 1984. There were localised floods on the 7th in the London area, with some places receiving 60 mm in just one hour.

England and Wales diary of highlights

Warm and very thundery overall. Very unsettled with frequent thunderstorms and localised floods at start. Hot mid-month but some more thundery downpours in places later. Mainly dry last week.

1st to 9th With weak low pressure over or near the region, the period was dominated by frequent outbreaks of heavy thundery rain. Mist and fog patches were also a regular feature first thing in country areas. Much of northern England was very wet on the 1st, Fylingdales (North York Moors) had 115 mm in 24 hours, their wettest day since 1984. At Leeming (Vale of York) 91 mm fell in 24 hours, their wettest day since 1971. From the 3rd to the 5th storms affected a number of areas especially central England, the south-east and East Anglia, with localised floods in some places. During the 7th there were more localised floods in parts of south-east England and the Midlands. Thunderstorms deposited 60 mm in an hour at Olney west of Bedford and at Hampstead Heath (North London), both about 1 in 200 year events. Hampstead's total was 71 mm, with local tube networks disrupted. The 8th and 9th saw more heavy thundery rain breaking out in many areas.

10th to 16th Low pressure moved away by 12th allowing a weak ridge to extend from the Azores. It was mainly dry with good sunny periods, however there were thundery outbreaks on the 10th and 15th over East Anglia and south-east England. Early on the 10th Southend had 54 mm causing local flooding. It became very warm or hot in places later. Early mist and fog patches along with hill and coastal fog affected some areas.

17th to 19th Mostly very warm or hot but unsettled as more thundery rain, heavy in places, fell in some parts. Wales and western areas were especially wet on the 17th, while further east some locations touched 31 °C. Most thundery activity moved to the Midlands and East Anglia thereafter as weak fronts migrated eastwards.

20th to 24th With low pressure close by over the North Sea the pattern stayed unsettled with rain at times. There were some downpours in Kent and London late on the 20th (25 mm in half an hour at Maidstone). The north-east was wet on the 22nd and again on the 23rd. Thundery showers also affected south-east and south-west England on the 23rd. Northern England was very wet on the 24th and thundery showers broke out later that day over many southern counties of England. Patchy mist and fog again visited East Anglia on many mornings.

25th to 31st Mainly dry as the Azores high extended its influence over the region. Rather cool at first becoming rather warm later. Thundery rain broke out later over the extreme south on the 25th. There were sunny periods in most parts after early mist and fog patches cleared. A low off Northern Ireland gave north-west districts a wet day on the 30th as it moved away to Scandinavia.

Scotland diary of highlights

Spells of fine weather, punctuated by days of rain.

After the frequent rain of mid-May to July, August provided something of a respite, with plenty of dry and fine weather. However, the spells of fair weather were interrupted by occasional wet days.

The first six days of August were dominated by high pressure, and there was a lot of warm and sunny weather. The highest temperature recorded was 26.3 °C at West Freugh (near Stranraer) on the 1st, but the temperature reached 25 °C somewhere on most days. An interruption to the fine weather occurred overnight on 2nd/3rd, when a front moved up from England and gave heavy rain over parts of the south and east.

A quiet spell of weather with light winds followed from the 7th to the 10th. A front in the North Sea moved slowly east and was replaced by a weak ridge. Slight rain in the east cleared and was replaced by brighter conditions in the west. A changeable westerly regime, with showers or periods of rain, prevailed from the 11th to the 18th. However, this included a strong rise of pressure on the 16th that gave a fine day. As the high retreated, warm southerly winds allowed the temperature to reach 26.8 °C at Charterhall in the Tweed valley.

Further fine weather with high pressure occurred from the 19th to 26th. A break took place on the 23rd and 24th as weak fronts crossed the country. Winds were often light northerly so that the brightest conditions were in the south and west.

The weather became more unsettled from the 27th, culminating on the 30th when a depression crossed the country. This brought a wet day almost everywhere, with 35 mm of rain at Dundrennan on the Solway coast. High pressure built from the Southwest again on the 31st.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

This was the driest August month since 1995. With the exception of the Friday 23rd the period from 15th to 28th was fairly dry throughout the Province. Many areas experienced around a third of the month in which little or no sunshine was recorded, making it the duller August month since 1999. It was a rather warm month across Northern Ireland with overall temperatures above normal which made it the warmest August since 1997. Both day and night-time temperatures were rarely below average.

1st to 9th The month started off warm, with the warmest day occurring on the 5th. One of the highest daily maximum temperatures of 25.7 °C was recorded in the Castlederg area on this day. However by the 7th conditions had become rather cool. Bands of rain brought light to moderate rain and showers on the 2nd and 3rd while moderate and at times heavy showers affected many areas on the 6th and 7th. Cloudy conditions meant that little sunshine was recorded on the 3rd, 6th, 7th and 8th.

10th to 14th Rather unsettled conditions occurred with bands of rain and showers recorded throughout the period. Sunny conditions prevailed on the 10th and for a time on the 13th but little or no sunshine was recorded during the rest of the period.

15th to 18th Warm and mostly dry with some good sunny spells. Though some light rain and scattered showers were recorded in some areas on the 17th and 18th.

19th to 27th On the whole a predominantly warm, sunny period. It was mainly dry in many parts, however scattered moderate showers were recorded on the 23rd, which were locally quite heavy in northern and central areas of province.

28th to 31st Scattered showers on the 28th followed by moderate to heavy rainfall on the 29th gave rise to daily rainfall totals of 12 mm or more in some places. It was fairly dry for the remainder of the month, but dull.

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